

MINUTES
CHARLOTTE COUNTY MARINE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Thursday, February 12, 2015, 9:30 a.m.
Charlotte County Administration Center
18500 Murdock Circle, Room 119, Port Charlotte, FL 33948

I. Call To Order and Pledge of Allegiance

II. Roll Call

III. Chairman's comments

A. REMINDER TO ALL VISITORS ADDRESSING THE COMMITTEE: PLEASE SIGN IN. It is helpful when preparing the Minutes. A clipboard and a pen are provided on the podium for your convenience.

B. REMINDER TO ALL MEMBERS STATE THEIR NAME AND ORGANIZATION and TO USE THE MICROPHONE WHEN ADDRESSING THE COMMITTEE. It is helpful when preparing the Minutes

Chair Ireland commented on the good MAC turnout at the Joint Workshop.

IV. Changes to the Agenda

None

V. Citizen Comments on Agenda Items

None

VI. Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Deutsch said he would briefly follow through on an issue raised by Capt. Blago regarding parking meters being removed where they are only lightly used; however, he noted, he had heard that other Commissioners didn't necessarily agree, and raised questions of equity with the meters where they are located. The Commissioner indicated he would continue to investigate the issue.

With regard to the Stump Pass channel markers, Commissioner Deutsch noted that WCIND did agree to share those costs up to about \$20,000. He also noted that a new executive for WCIND is being hired; there were 40-50 candidates to be considered, with about six making it to the interview part of the process.

The Commissioner commented on the weekend's Regatta and the overall success of the event and the positive responses; he then remarked on the presentation on the mooring field, acknowledging that the BSAC is also interested in this topic. Commissioner Deutsch cautioned against the Advisory Committees taking the concerns about illegal uses in Chadwick Cove and mixing that up with the concept of mooring fields. He noted that Chuck Mopps was in attendance today, and could speak to the mooring field issues.

Mr. Harris responded, saying that the subject of the mooring field should be put aside until after the clean-up of vessels illegally parked in Chadwick Cove. Commissioner Deutsch thought the different issues could be handled separately or simultaneously, but agreed they should be considered separately. Further discussion ensued on the subject of encouraging people to follow the law as it exists now; it

was noted that fines have been levied against some boat owners there. Mr. Hoffman commented that, looking at all the mooring field requirements, he feels what is involved is too much to spend for the amount of mooring field accommodations that would fit in Chadwick Cove.

Mr. Ludvig joined the meeting at 9:43.

Mr. Harris pointed out that there had been a study done in June 2010 at the direction of the BSAC, which did a cost out on the engineering and permitting process and administrative costs associated with it that increases the costs; it is safe to assume costs have risen since then. Commissioner Deutsch responded that he would rather the group not talk about HOW to get it done, but rather decide first if it is a GOOD IDEA. If people feel it is a good idea, then will be the time to figure out how to make it happen. Mr. Rose commented that while a mooring field would be an advantage to County but only if it is large enough. Likewise, it should be located where there is some existing facility, not in the middle of nowhere, where it would just become a dumping field.

Chair Ireland pointed out that Chadwick Cove is not on the agenda but the group can return to it under Other Business.

VII. Regular Business

- A. Approval of the [Minutes](#) of the Pre-Agenda Meeting from February 5, 2015 – Additions, Corrections or Deletions. – Approved by acclamation.
- B. Approval of the [Minutes](#) of the Regular Meeting from January 8, 2015 – Additions, Corrections or Deletions. Approved by acclamation.
- C. MSBU Update

Mr. Chuck Mopps offered a brief summary of the items on the monthly report which had been circulated by Mr. Logan earlier, noting that the National Marine Fisheries and the Army Corps are holding up a number of projects; Our consultant has created a review of these issues which sent to Dan Quick, Kelly Shoemaker and then on to the County's Congressional representatives, to investigate the cause of the hold-up, especially since no critical habitat is being impacted by these projects.

With regard to Gulf Cove, since the written project update, they have approved the concept of making their watersheds fewer (from 27 down to about 12) by combining finger canals and consultants have completed a study. Discussion was held on what the difference would be between 4 and 5 feet dredging (assuming a permit to dredge to five feet was issued, but only dredged to four feet) and it turned out to be a 70% reduction in volume; this data would be weighed against their budget.

On a related matter, this section was not included in the WCIND permit for Charlotte County, because had too many watersheds; this led to a request for a new study. This new study is now available, so it's time to meet with WCIND to discuss project feasibility.

Mr. Mopps then reviewed the Project Update highlights; he noted that Jason Ouiment of Public Works reports that markers have been placed for Suncoast, which is now done. With regard to Stump Pass. Mr. Mopps indicated there are currently about 100 easements needed back from property owners, mostly from north of where sand has been placed at the north end of the state park up to the

beach complex; they are actively pursuing getting those last easements. He also noted there had been significant erosion from the Sarasota County line down to the Beach Complex; the problem there is funding in that they are part of the MSTU but not the MSBU, and sand placement is only done within the MSBU because it is a direct benefit. Solutions are being sought for this situation, including the possibility of a "child MSBU".

Commissioner Deutsch noted there will be a master permit from the Corps and asked regarding the additional work whether the process to amend or enlarge that be simpler than the multi-year process required to get the master approval. In other words, when the master permit final approval this month (hopefully), could we amend that to include other areas – is that laborious? Mr. Mopps responded that permit modifications are always easier, but he added that another consideration was north of the County line and does Sarasota County also have a project that could turn this into a joint project. In the end, he said, the key element is the funding.

Capt. Blago raised a issue about bringing sand north, which he noted would be a big change from the project start in the '90s, when the state said sand could not be placed on the upside drift of the Pass; he noted that when that property became a state park, that rule was modified so the Park could get sand. He also noted that one problem for Manasota Key residents wanting to get sand in the past was one notorious property owner that wouldn't sign the easement; so what if that person keeps refusing, how will that affect this project?

Mr. Mopps responded on the subject, noting that under the law as currently written, the mean high water line or vegetation line basically defines the limit of that person's property; if the work goes on seaward of that property, we're working on common property of the United States. (He also noted there were originally three of these contentious property owners; two have since died, so now there is the potential for moving forward.) Mr. Mopps also mentioned that in the past, people didn't understand what might happen in terms of critical erosion; now their neighbors have bigger beaches, and people aren't see huge increases in foot traffic, so maybe their concerns are less now.

Discussion continued about the areas severely eroded north of county line, especially near Blind Pass and the value of having a joint project, both for improved funding and improved efficacy. Capt. Blago indicated his concern was that the dredging of Stump Pass becomes a hostage to the issue of beach renourishment projects.

Ms. Buck noted that there's lot of effort currently to bring boaters into Charlotte Harbor and asked about conditions in Stump Pass at the moment; Mr. Mopps commented that this is only his second day back in this position, but indicated that staff can post about conditions on the County website, where people can easily check on it. Ms. Buck indicated that the PGBA has a website that boaters use also; Mr. Mopps suggested that the PGBA site deploy the County link on their site.

Mr. Mopps then commented on the mooring field issue, indicating that information on what the requirements are to maintain these fields, they are available under the CZMA (Coastal Zone Management Act.) Further discussion continued on this topic.

- D. Budget Update – Mr. David Johnston was not present. Commissioner Deutsch commented that he was very optimistic that the County would have outside sources of money to help out with Stump Pass; he indicated he wants to see sources outside of this county to help out, noting that improvements to Stump Pass benefit more than just Charlotte County.

VIII. New Business

Timeline for replacement of swing bridge and ICW closures – Mr. Andy Stevens indicated he was unable to address it today, but agreed to cover this at the March meeting. Ms. Buck commented that the next meeting would be a long one devoted to budget items, and the Chair agreed the timeline might not be covered at that time.

IX. Old Business

- a. Shrimp Boat – Mr. Stevens indicated he and Roger DeBruler had talked to the owner of the vessel Seminole Trader; the vessel's poor condition was such that it couldn't make the journey. In better news, he indicated that there is another boat, larger and in better condition, whose owner willing to donate it to the County; additionally, CNIF funding may be available to strip the boat to prep it for artificial reef use. Mr. Stevens indicated he would bring photos of the boat to the next meeting. Further discussion ensued on the advantages of the artificial reefs to divers and anglers. Commissioner Deutsch asked whether the owner who decided against donating the boat is getting it moved; Mr. Stevens indicated the man may have other legal issues pending concerning that boat.
- b. Update on Bay Heights Project – Mr. Stevens indicated he had spoken to Mr. Warner, Project Manager, subsequent to the last update he had provided; there have been no real changes since that updated. DEP is allowing for mitigation of the sea grasses issues near the basin; they are in the final permitting process. There has been input from the public, and traffic control was raised. Mr. Stevens commented on how the trailer rig has gotten bigger over time; but FDOT says it won't be a problem and they are the authority. He indicated he would ask Mr. Warner to come back with another update once they are a little further along.

X. Other Business

Chair Ireland moved on next to the introduction and acceptance of the application of John Dauster, recommended by the Charlotte Harbor Yacht Club to replace Mr. Wilson. Mr. Dauster was not present, but Chair Ireland commented on his qualifications to fill the vacant seat; other members also indicated they had seen the resume and had become familiar with his qualifications. It was agreed that a vote could be held now:

Motion: Mr. Hofmeister; to accept Mr. Dauster's nomination; second by Mr. Buckley; unanimous vote to forward to the Commission for approval.

Ms. Buck raised the question of where he would sit; some discussion ensued on whether it would be necessary to relocate the meeting to another venue.

Turning next to the subject of Chadwick Cove, Chair Ireland asked that any members that have opinion on this, please speak up. Mr. Buck noted that she understood the difference between the mooring field and the legal action being implemented in Chadwick Cove; however, based on Mr. Stevens' report at the

workshop, she said she felt it was very concerning the huge amount of money that would be required to establish and then maintain. She expressed concern about the impact on other activities if available money was bled off into mooring field spending.

Commissioner Deutsch indicated he was not sure that's the ideal place for a mooring field; if we put one in Chadwick Cove or near there, then those boats would leave rather than be in the field. He suggested the County needs more direction about mooring fields, questioned whether there shouldn't be some self-determination for the local population in terms of regulating it; he also said that to the extent there are no good state definitions about mooring fields, Charlotte County could lead the discussion.

Ms. Buck suggested there be feedback on what would be most beneficial to the waters for the community around Englewood. Chair Ireland commented that the issue of Chadwick Cove originally came up because of the issue of waste dumping; he reminded the group that there are only three marine policeman and Officer Lytle has done all he can using the options he has. Chair Ireland continued, saying that mooring fields are a good idea; the one at Laishley Park is somewhat misplaced, and one at Chadwick Cove would likely also be misplaced because too small for what it would cost to maintain and regulate. His conclusion was: Mooring fields, a good idea generally; the Chadwick Cove location, not so good. Further discussion continued on this topic; Chair Ireland agreed the group was probably looking at April or May before the discussion comes back around. Mr. Buckley said he agreed that people should be thinking about the need for proper supervision and maintenance, and therefore the need for such a facility to be located appropriately.

Capt. Blago added the comment that this is an Englewood resident/boater/ problem; in any event, he said, there is no shortage of places to put your boat in that area: There are many marinas. The issue of "free" was raised, but Capt. Blago pointed out, there is no actual "free" facility. He suggested that the marinas in that area should be contacted and a summit held with them, to get their input, and perhaps encourage them to open up their facilities more broadly as an alternative to building a facility that perhaps will be underused. Ms. Buck recommended that members do their research and put thoughts to paper for a future meeting, along with swing bridge closures, for the April and May meetings. Mr. Harris mentioned the 2010 study, where much of this research has already been gathered together. Arrangements were made to distribute the study.

Mr. David Johnston arrived at the meeting.

Mr. Hamilton commented on the mention at a prior meeting of a measuring device that could be deployed at Chadwick Cove to measure pollution; Ms. Mary McMurray responded on this subject, noting that there is no current technology for continuous testing for fecal coliform. She found that what is available (sediment testing) is very expensive. After speaking with Officer Lytle, she concluded that the best, cheapest approach is doing law enforcement, just as they previously did with Dog Island, working with other agencies.

She reported that FDEP is still taking monthly samples and that so far, there have been no big hits. She noted that this testing can continue, and the agency is happy to receive suggestions; however, a \$9,000 instrument, plus the

monitoring costs and lab result costs suggests that law enforcement is the better answer. Chair Ireland agreed, noting that if there had been significant levels found in testing, that would be one thing, but as it is actually so minimal there is no justification for huge expenditures. Mr. Harris asked Ms. McMurray if she had heard whether the boat owner who went to court and was fined, was caught on the basis of a dye pack in his tank; Ms. McMurray said she was not informed about it.

Mr. Schermerhorn suggested there should be no mooring field in Lemon Bay or Chadwick Cove; in general, he said, perhaps there is some merit in a public/private partnership, but the Fishermans Village area is the only proper spot for a mooring field.

Ms. Buck asked Ms. McMurray about the snorkeling trip next month; Ms. McMurray discussed this topic briefly; she also spoke about conditions on Dog Island and its recent misuse by mullet fishermen. She noted that staff which had managed these facilities has left and there is some question about how to deal with camping going forward. As for the snorkeling trip, they can accommodate up to 15 people, probably in April; she indicated she would send email to the Recording Secretary and await feedback on peoples' availability.

The Chair recognized the arrival of David Johnston and asked if he had anything to comment on; Mr. Johnston said he did not, but did offer the information that Fiscal had received a very large volume of requests for next year's budget, well beyond the available funds. He indicated he would pass them along to the Recording Secretary in due course, and could then be posted on the website.

XI. Citizen Comments

- None offered.

XII. Good of the Order

- Ms. Buck noted with regard to the sailing activities in Harbor, pictures have been displayed on the meeting room monitors throughout the meeting; comments were offered about the 200 vessels that participated. AMI-Crossroads Kids were singled out for special praise for their efforts at the Regatta. Comments were also offered on the boat lift at the Charlotte Harbor Yacht Club with the observation that one was needed at the Beach Complex also. The Chair offered congratulations to Ms. Buck on the successful effort.

XIII. Next Meetings

- The next Pre-Agenda Meeting will be held Thursday, March 5, 2015 at 9:30 a.m. in B-106.
- The next Regular Meeting will be held Thursday, March 12, 2015 at 9:30 a.m. in Room 119

XIV. Adjournment

On motion made and unanimously accepted, the meeting was adjourned at 10:45 a.m.